CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method for automatically controlling at least one media peripheral via a communication network, the method comprising:

automatically identifying by a first system, at a first location, the at least one media peripheral communicatively coupled to at least one of the first system and a second system, the second system at a second location;

automatically establishing a communication link between the first system and the at least one media peripheral;

automatically requesting performance of a selected operation on the at least one media peripheral;

automatically determining authorization of the performance of the selected operation;

automatically performing the selected operation on the at least one media peripheral, if the authorization is successful; and

automatically not performing the selected operation on the at least one media peripheral, if the authorization is not successful.

2. The method of claim 1 wherein the at least one media peripheral comprises one of a digital camera, a personal computer, a digital camcorder, a MP3 player, a mobile multi-media gateway, a home juke-box, and a personal digital assistant.

3. The method of claim 1 wherein the at least one media peripheral comprises a processor running media capture software and/or media player software.

4. The method of claim 1 wherein the communication link is established via a wired connection.

5. The method of claim 1 wherein the communication link is established via a wireless connection.

6. The method of claim 1 wherein the operation comprises one of:

powering the at least one media peripheral on or off;

scanning the at least one media peripheral in angle about at least one axis of rotation;

transferring stored media from the at least one media peripheral to at least one of the first system and the second system;

transferring stored media from at least one of the first system and the second system to the at least one media peripheral;

transferring software from at least one of the first system and the second system to the media peripheral;

initiating updating of status information of the at least one media peripheral;

initiating a test of the at least one media peripheral;

initiating a play mode of the at least one media peripheral;

initiating a stop mode of the at least one media peripheral;

initiating a rewind mode of the at least one media peripheral;

initiating a fast forward mode of the at least one media peripheral;

initiating a trick mode of the at least one media peripheral;

determining whether the at least one media peripheral is within range of at least one of the first system and the second system;

putting the at least one media peripheral into a sleep state;

changing a resolution parameter of the at least one media peripheral; and

changing a frame rate parameter of the at least one media peripheral.

7. The method of claim 1 wherein the at least one media peripheral is co-located with respect to the first system.

8. The method of claim 1 wherein the at least one media peripheral is co-located with respect to the second system.

9. The method of claim 1 wherein at least one of the first system and the second system comprises a set-top-box based media processing system.

10. The method of claim 1 wherein at least one of the first system and the second system comprises a personal computer based media processing system.

11. The method of claim 1 wherein at least one of the first system and the second system comprises a television based media processing system.

12. The method of claim 1 wherein the establishing, the selecting, and the performing are accomplished periodically over time.

13. The method of claim 1 wherein the establishing, the selecting, and the performing are accomplished at one or more pre-designated times.

14. The method of claim 1 wherein the establishing the communication link is automatically initiated by the first system.

15. The method of claim 1 wherein the establishing the communication link is automatically initiated by the at least one media peripheral.

16. A method for automatically monitoring at least one media peripheral via a communication network, the method comprising:

automatically identifying by a first system, at a first location, the at least one media peripheral communicatively coupled to at least one of the first system and a second system, the second system at a second location;

automatically establishing a communication link between the first system and the at least one media peripheral;

automatically determining authorization for monitoring of the at least one media peripheral;

automatically monitoring, by the first system, at least one status parameter of the at least one media peripheral, if the authorization is successful; and

automatically responding, by the first system, to a state of the at least one status parameter, if the authorization is successful; and

automatically not monitoring and not responding to a state of the at least one status parameter, if the authorization is not successful.

17. The method of claim 16 wherein the at least one media peripheral comprises one of a digital camera, a personal computer, a digital camcorder, a MP3 player, a mobile multi-media gateway, a home juke-box, and a personal digital assistant.

18. The method of claim 16 wherein the at least one media peripheral comprises a processor running at least one of media capture software and media player software.

19. The method of claim 16 wherein the communication link is established via a wired connection.

20. The method of claim 16 wherein the communication link is established via a wireless connection.

21. The method of claim 16 wherein the at least one status parameter comprises a battery level, an "on/off" indication, an amount of storage used, an amount of storage remaining, a "within range" indication, a software version, a model number, a serial number, and a certificate ID.

22. The method of claim 16 wherein the at least one media peripheral is co-located with respect to the first system.

23. The method of claim 16 wherein the at least one media peripheral is co-located with respect to the second system.

24. The method of claim 16 wherein at least one of the first system and the second system comprises a set-top-box based media processing system.

25. The method of claim 16 wherein at least one of the first system and the second system comprises a personal computer based media processing system.

26. The method of claim 16 wherein at least one of the first system and the second system comprises a television based media processing system.

27. The method of claim 16 wherein the establishing, the monitoring, and the responding are accomplished periodically over time.

28. The method of claim 16 wherein the establishing, the monitoring, and the responding are accomplished at one or more pre-designated times.

29. The method of claim 16 wherein the responding comprises at least one of storing the state of the at least one status parameter and displaying the state of the at least one status parameter.

30. The method of claim 16 wherein the establishing the communication link is automatically initiated by the first system.

31. The method of claim 16 wherein the establishing the communication link is automatically initiated by the at least one media peripheral.